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AUTHOR Bacchus, Kazim
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ABSTRACT

The vocationalization of education is different in economically less developed coutnries (LDCs) than in the economically more developed ones (MDCs). Although there may appear to be similarities, there are also important differences between them that largely arise from three contexts: (1) their social and economic structures and the resulting differences in demand for skilled labor; (2) the role of the LDCs as "price-takers" rather than "price-makers" on the world market; and (3) the development strategies they use, often without full recognition of their own realities and resource limitations. As a result, the problems arising from the efforts by these countries to vocationalize the curriculum of their schools are in many ways qualitatively different, and this whole educational strategy is usually much more problematic for them than for the MDCs. There are also major differences between the developing countries themselves, which make any kind of overall generalization on this issue even more difficult, but there are enough commonalities among them that would make these observations somewhat applicable to most of the LDCs. With a more appropriate development strategy, changes in the curriculum, including the introduction of vocational subjects, might play a more effective role in increasing the contribution that education can make toward raising the productivity of an LDC. However, political leaders in the LDCs have not followed this course. Therefore, to say that vocational education is or is not a useful educational approach is by itself meaningless, despite the research results that now exist. (KC)

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THE SUCCESS OF VOCATIONALISATION DEPENDS ON THE POLITICAL CONTEXT

by
Kazim Bacchus
Visiting Professor
University of London Institute of Education

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seemingly logical conclusion i.e. with vocationalisation of education we should be able to increase the range of relevant skills which individuals in the society have and this should improve the productivity of their education. The first assumption is that the skills which schools try to pass on through vocationalisation of their curriculum are those which are relevant to the needs of the society and therefore the individuals who possess such skills are likely to contribute more to the overall development of the country than those without them. The second assumption is that the type of education, which transmits these 'relevant' skills and knowledge, is also likely, in economic terms, to yield not only a greater social but also a higher rate of individual return than an education which does not. In other words industrial arts or vocational education programmes which aim at providing individuals with skills relevant to the development needs of the society must be more economically valuable both to the individual and to the society than an education which does not transmit such skills.

It seems difficult to refute either of these assumptions on which the case for vocationalising the curriculum is often built and which many education policy makers treat as axiomatic. True, it might be argued that schools have not been very effective in passing on these skills or that formal educational institutions, as they now operate, are not the best means of doing the job or even that the skills which schools have tried to pass on in these practical subjects were not particularly relevant to the needs of the society. But with these issues we have shifted from policy considerations about vocationalising the curriculum to one of dealing with policy implementation. i.e we are now questioning the instructional strategy that is being used and the selection of curriculum content- **what** type of skills should be taught and **how** they should be taught in order to increase their effectiveness.

But while the assumptions underlying the efforts at

The Success of Vocationalisation Depends on the Political Context:

by M.Kazim Bacchus

Introduction

Let me begin by first pointing out that my presentation deals with the vocationalisation of education in the economically less developed countries, the LDC's . It begins by suggesting that while there might be many apparent similarities in this area with the economically more developed ones - the MDC's- there are also important differences between them which largely arise from their social and economic structures and the resulting differences in demand for skilled manpower, the role of the LDC's as "price-takers" rather than "price-makers" on the world market and the development strategies which they use, often without full recognition of their own realities and resource limitations. As a result the problems arising from the efforts by these countries to vocationalise the curriculum of their schools are in many ways qualitatively different and this whole educational strategy is usually much more problematic for them than for the MDC's. There are also major differences between the developing countries themselves which make any kind of overall generalisation on this issue even more difficult but there are enough commonalities among them which would make my observations not totally inapplicable to most of the LDC's.

Towards a Definition of the term "Vocational Education"

To begin with in discussing the issue of vocationalising education in the LDC's we are faced with the question of definition. In the MDC's the term "vocational education" tends to be used to refer to the type of programme which is usually offered to students who have completed a secondary education course and which provides them with the competencies that would qualify them for certain skilled occupations such

as carpentry, joinery, automotive mechanic etc. In these countries there is also a distinction between this type of education and that provided through the inclusion of practical or industrial arts subjects in the secondary schools which are offered as part of a programme of general education. But in most developing countries the completion of a secondary school course is hardly ever a prior requirement for vocational training since most pupils ordinarily receive only a few years of elementary or primary education. So the vocationalising of the school curriculum in this context usually refers to efforts that are made, even at the primary school level, to provide pupils wih certain skills and attitudes that would influence their occupational choices away from white collar jobs to which they have traditionally aspired and making them somewhat better prepared to work in other types of occupation.

There is another source of confusion that arises over the use of the term "vocationalising education". If it means providing students with the type of education that aims at fitting them specifically for jobs, then the "modern" or "western" education which is offered in schools in the developing countries has, from its inception, been essentially vocational. Parents in these countries initially began to send their children to the schools introduced by westerners in order to acquire the kind of education, training or certification to qualify them for entry into certain jobs in the newly emerging European dominated sectors of these economies. This applied whether the locals were taught to read and write in the language of the colonising power and acquire simple computational skills in order to fill lower level clerical jobs or were being prepared for slightly better positions in the occupational hierarchy by being taught Latin and Greek.

In contrast, education in many economically more developed countries like the United Kingdom did not originally have the same almost exclusive vocational orientation - in fact its focus was sometimes quite the opposite and the education of a "gentleman and scholar" was almost

completely opposed to preparing individuals for practical and essentially manual activities. Even when schools were provided for the masses the concern seemed to have mainly been the moral elevation or rehabilitation of the working class - not preparing them for specific jobs- at least not initially. For example, Professor A.V.Judges in his inaugural lecture, not only noted that the 1890 education code in Britain "did not provide for more than a trace of free technical instruction" but went on to suggest that "when the history of technical education comes to be written...it would be found to be true that ...the English have so far not been able to bring a strong technical element into public education at the secondary level". (1) This initial unresponsiveness to the needs of industry for technical skills was partly why parallel institutions such as the Mechanics Institutes and the City and Guilds originally developed, outside the formal educational system with the aim of meeting more directly the demand for specific skills being demanded by the emerging industrial order. A somewhat similar picture would be seen if we were look at traditional Chinese education and the Chinese literati even grow exceedingly long finger nails to emphasize the abhorrence of the scholar for manual work.

Be this as it may, the point here was that when western schooling was introduced in most developing countries it had a strong vocational focus i.e. it was essentially geared towards preparing individuals for jobs in the emerging European or expatriated dominated sector of these economies. This western education not only lacked any indigenous roots but also, at first, de-emphasised the traditional knowledge and skills of the society and even its local culture and language. The latter came to be regarded as low status knowedge and had to be passed on through, what in today's terms would be called non-formal educational processes. It was not the kind of education which was thought to have any contribution to make towards the development of the society. Therefore since all western

type education which was originally introduced in the LDC's was meant to be "vocational", then we have to specify what we mean when we use the term "vocationalising education" in these societies.

Let me develop this point a bit further. In many of these societies western type education was first offered in order to prepare individuals to become clerks and junior functionaries either in Government departments or in the private sector or to become teachers, preachers, catechists and later even priests.. For this purpose an "academic" education which stressed reading and writing skills and some general knowledge was what was mainly considered necessary and this was the kind of instruction which the primary schools offered. But since the number of 'educated' individuals required for these jobs was limited it was considered necessary that any spread of education in these countries had to be focussed on preparing the great majority of students eventually for the everyday life as farmers and other roles, especially in the rural communities since it was realised that there would not be enough white collar jobs available in these societies to provide employment opportunities for all those who were increasingly clamouring for an education. Therefore practical subjects began to be included in the curriculum of primary schools with the hope that the training which it would provide would better equip them with the kind of skills and attitudes that would encourage to seek manual rather than just white collar occupations.

Later as secondary education expanded, the inclusion of practical subjects in the curriculum of these schools also began to take place with similar expectations i.e. that such subjects would widen students' occupational choices to include skilled manual jobs, so that they would not just wait, as they have traditionally done, for clerical positions in the public or even in the private sector. Incidentally there was also a class and a colour bias in the type of educational programmes for which children

were destined with the middle class and the local whites being assigned to the academic programmes and the working class and the non-whites being given the practical or pre-vocational education

In this paper therefore the phrase "vocationalising education" as it relates to the developing countries would refer to the inclusion of "practical" subjects" in the curriculum of primary and secondary schools with the aim of providing pupils with the skills and attitudes that would influence and widen their occupational choices. I guess that this is why the title of the conference is not "Vocational Education" but "Vocationalising Education".

The Controversy of the 1960's

On reading or re-reading the literature on education in the developing countries one would have thought that, after the controversy over vocationalising the school curriculum which raged in the 1960's, between advocates of this approach such as Balogh (2) and Dumont (3) who saw it as the solution to the educational problems of the LDC's, and those in opposition to it such as Foster and others, the issue was dead and buried. But the fact that we can mount such a high level conference on the topic of vocationalising the curriculum, such as we have here now, indicates that the issue is still very much with us. Incidentally the "death sentence" on the vocationalisation of the curriculum was pronounced mainly by first world scholars with some support from their intellectual compradors and former students from the developing countries. It was based on the research evidence that existed at the time and which has continued to be supported by results from subsequent studies.

The Issue has Refused to Stay "Buried".

On the other hand, judging from some of the educational developments that have continued to take place in the LDC's it seems that this issue has never been entirely abandoned by their key educational policy makers, even though, through the advice offered influential foreign

education experts, including those from the international agencies it might have been placed on the back burner at times. But even then, despite the available evidence, many LDC's never fully gave up their efforts at diversifying the curriculum of their schools, increasingly at the secondary level, by adding practical, pre-vocational or even vocational subjects to it. One outcome of these efforts has been the fifty (50) or more educational projects with vocational education components, for which the World Bank or other international agencies have lent or donated funds to the developing countries during the recent past.

Vocationalising the Curriculum has Deep Historical Roots in many LDC's

The faith in the vocationalisation of the curriculum as a means of improving the contribution which education can make to the development process has deep historical roots and has continued to persist despite the fact that traditionally these practical subjects have had little or no appeal to the students or their parents in the LDC's. However in the present situation of increasing unemployment among school leavers,this attitude might be changing somewhat..

In the former West Indian colonies the controversy over vocationalising the curriculum, even of primary schools emerged ever since the first formal attempts began to made in the 1830's to provide education for the masses. For example, in 1835 the Kingston Chronicle, in commenting on the curriculum which the schools in Jamaica then offered suggested that:

> **Instead of being taught the mechanical arts, the use of the plough and harrow, the plane and the adze, the awl or needle.....instead of practical industry the children are (first) taught to read the Bible and sing hymns. They all begin at the wrong end. They attempt to finish the superstructure**

before they have laid the foundations. (4)

An interesting point in this suggestion and one that continues to be made is that education should be primarily concerned with preparing individuals to be economically productive in the socio-economic context in which they live. In West Indian societies the teaching of practical skills was regarded as necessary in laying the foundation stone for such a life. Other subjects-in this case even reading- which were offered for enjoyment and for the spiritual elevation of the pupils was seen as part of the superstructure of the educational programme and were considered by the then dominant planter group to be of secondary importance

These and other similar criticisms of the educational programmes offered in the West Indies led the British Government to ask Sir James Kay Shuttleworth of the United Kingdom, to draw up an appropriate educational policy for the masses in the colonies. The outcome (5) was a paper giving practical suggestions for organising "day schools of industry" as part of the system of education for "the Coloured Races of the Empire" and this became the British Government's first officially sponsored colonial educational policy. The objective was to have an educational programme which combined "intellectual and industrial training", one in which "instruction was "interwoven with labour " because it was considered that only through this approach to education would "the native labour of the West Indian colonies be made generally available for the cultivation of the soil".

About six decades later, i.e. by the turn of the century the then Secretary of State for the Colonies, came up with the most comprehensive programme ever put forward anywhere even up to today, for vocationalising the curriculum of the schools in the region. Starting from the assumption that the West Indies were and must remain agricultural colonies, it was argued that

it would be deplorable, if the effect of an improved system of education were to be, to inspire in the rising generation a certain disgust with the agricultural pursuits in which the children's parents have been engaged and (create) a desire to earn a living only by means of clerical employment. That this is a danger (with the present educational system) cannot be denied.(6)

The major objective of this new programme was again to fit children for the "practical work of life" and for this reason schools were to offer a "sound industrial instruction" aimed at the training of the "hand and eye" in subjects relating to agriculture and agricultural pursuits and farm life. As a guide the Colonial Office even sent out to each Gover .or of the various West Indian territories a pamphlet which comprehensively described what was then considered the most modern approach at integrating "industrial" and "intellectual" activities especially in schools in the rural areas. It was the curriculum content and instructional strategy then used in the rural schools in France. (7)

This view that a major concern of schools in the colonies should be to teach practical subjects was also reflected in the first statement on Educational Policy for British Tropical Africa issued in 1925 and Lord Hailey was still suggesting a few years later that "simple village craft' should be a key element in the instructional programmes of African schools - with boys being given enough skills and knowlege about construcyion so that they could build their own homes on the model of those which were to be found in the villages. In many other developing countries this policy of providing pupils with the kind of vocational skills which would increase their economic contribution to their societies was

generally accepted. Even idealists like Gandhi with his proposal for "basic schools" and ideologues like Mao Zedong with his "half day-half work schools" supported the general idea that schools should attempt to pass on to their students the kind of practical skills and inculcate in them those attitutudes which would better prepare them for the kind of economic existence which these societies offered. Vocationalising the curriculum was therefore a policy which was actively pursued both by the colonial rulers and the indigenous leaders of these countries and this has continued even after their countries had achieved independence.

Political Motivation an Insufficient Explanation of Recurrent Efforts ot Vocationalising Education.

There is no doubt that these attempts at providing "industrial" or practical training or at vocationalising the curriculum of schools had at their roots, a strong political motivation. They represented an important part of the effort of the colonisers and later, the indigenous leaders, to use the instructional programmes of the schools as a mechanism of social control- a means of trying to "cool off" or lower the occupational aspirations of the youngsters in these societies to a more "realistic" level. It was also hoped that this would better prepare the children of the masses to serve as a cheap source of labour and in countries where there was a resident white population it was understood that such pre-vocational training would not affect the exclusive right of access by the white group to certain jobs in the economy. Even more recently in a study of Practical Subjects in Kenyan Academic Secondary Schools John Lauglo (8) indicated that the attempt at diversification of the curriculum there, had not been so much an attempt to meet certain projected manpower needs but was essentially "a political response" to a situation in which the products from the regular academic programmes of the schools were increasingly having difficulties in finding jobs .

The Logic Behind the Argument for Vocationalising Education

But while one acknowledges the importance of political considerations in these efforts at vocationalising the curriculum of schools in the LDC's yet to see them simply as attempts by the dominant groups to reproduce the existing social order and maintain social control over the masses by moderating or reducing their "unrealistic" levels of aspiration would be too limited an explanation of why these attempts continue to be repeated. These social control considerations are not the only explanation of why political leaders, even those in the developing countries, seek educational change.

If one tries to ascertain why there is this continuing faith in vocationalisation of the curriculum among key educational policy makers in the LDC's one sees that there are some eminently logical and reasonable arguments which are either formally put forward or implicitly accepted for such programmes. First of all these policy makers still tend to believe that one of the major functions of schooling is the development, among the young, of appropriate skills and attitudes, or competencies and committments, which are needed to make the economic system of the society function more efficiently. This is an assumption that has dominated and still continues to dominate much of the thinking about the content of education - from the days of the apocryphal New- Fist Hammer-Maker in the Saber Tooth Curriculum to the human capital theorists who argue that the major contribution of education to economic development has been through its qualitative improvements of the manpower resources of a society.

Therefore most of the educational policy makers seem to take it as axiomatic that if individuals in a society have the 'apopropriate' skills they would be overall more productive than those without such skills.

Following this they have made what seems to be a reasonable conclusion - that if students at school were provided with some kind of useful practical or vocational skills which were relevant to the needs of the society, they would be better eqipped to contribute to its economic development. As they looked around their existing school systems they saw that the type of education which students were receiving was "too academic" and was leading them to aspire to white collar jobs which were becoming relatively more difficult to obtain. Therefore they felt that, if schools could provide students with or introduce them to other more useful skills this would widen their range of occupational choices, make their aspirations more "realistic" and increase the possibility that such education/training would better prepare them to meet existing manpower shortages in the societies.

Further the skills and attitudes that such individuals would develop was likely to make them more desirous of entering the labour force earlier and hence decrease the demand for schooling which was rising faster that many countries could afford. And for those who still could not find wage employment this kind of preparation would, it was believed, help them to create jobs of their own and thus become self-employed. So within this context it was felt that it would be a more effective educational policy if schools attempted to provide students with relevant practical or vocational training. This seems to be a not unreasonable assumption and it is difficult to fault the logic of the argument. It is this kind of reasoning which largely explains why educational policy makers in the LDC's do keep on returning to this solution.

As I indicated before, during the past one hundred and fifty years in the history of formal schooling in the West Indies one finds that continuing efforts have been made to develop an educational policy which would combine "intellectual work with industrial pursuits" and despite the

fact that all these efforts have not been very successful this did not seem to deter the policy makers, whether they were the colonial rulers or the indigenous leaders of the newly independent nations, from trying again and again to implement this policy. These efforts were usually revived whenever the authorities considered that there were too many school graduates who could not find the white collar jobs for which they keep looking after leaving school. One even sees such efforts being re-doubled more recently in many other developing countries where the outputs from their school systems, especially at the secondary level and above, have been increasing faster than jobs in the modern sector where 'educated individuals' in these societies have traditionally looked for employment.

Logic Versus Reality

But despite the logic of this argument and the continuing efforts by educational policy makers in the LDC's to implement such a policy the available research evidence, as we all know, has indicated that in the real life of most developing countries the outcomes have been somewhat different.

First of all the cost of providing this vocational type education is substantially higher than that of traditional literary instruction. and in economic terms these higher costs do not seem to be compensated by a higher rate of return. In fact the study by Psacharopoulos and Loxley (9) suggest that in Columbia the social rate of return on the diversified curriculum was no higher than for the regular schools, despite the higher rate of capital investment, while in Tanzania the return might have even been somewhat lower. Secondly, among those who have taken pre-vocational subjects as part of their educational programme there does not seem to be any marked shift in their occupational choices. Nor has their exposure to such subjects reduce their desire to proceed further up the educational ladder. Thirdly when they enter the work force their employers do not financially recognise the value of such skills and in fact

those with the academic education are often better rewarded, in terms of the salaries they receive. Faced with this evidence the developoment of a rational educational policy would seem to suggest a withdrawal from such efforts at introducing practical subjects in the curriculum of schools. Such a strategy would be particularly appropriate for countries where universalization of primary education has not yet been achieved. The argument that can be put forward in such a situation is, rather than the Government increasing the per capital cost of education by attempting to vocationalize the curriculum of schools it would make much more economic sense to use these additional funds to universalize primary education, which is seen to have greater rate of return on investment than educational programmes aimed at diversifying the curriculum of the existing schools by introducing practical subjects in them.

Are Intervening Variables Affecting the Rate of Return on Efforts at Vocationalising Education?

But while from the research evidence, this seems to be the obvious policy direction which the LDC's should follow the question of adding practical or industrial arts subjects to the curriculum of schools cannot be dismissed so lightly especialy since, as the historical evidence indicates, this policy has refused to stay buried. In such a situation in which the available research evidence seem to go against the logic of an argument we need to look again at the asssumptions underlying the proposition itself to see if these can be faulted. If they cannot be, then we have to examine the context in which the evidence arises since there might be important intervening variables that are responsible for the kind of results which are thrown up and which might be distorting the expected relationships-in this case, that between training provided in certain skills in the secondary or even the primary schools- and the "productivity" of the individuals who have acquired such skills.

So let us look again at the assumptions which underlie the

vocationalising the curriculum seem reasonable yet the evidence, as indicated previously continues to show that he outcomes are not those which one would normally expect given the assumptions stated above. So it is not enough to say that vocationalising the curriculum does not work- we need to go beyond this and see whether there are other variables which are operating within the particular socio- economic context of these societies that might be interfering with the expected relationship. And for this we have to look at the nature of the socio-economic structures of the developing countries and the kind of development strategies which they are pursuing.

The Failure of Efforts at Vocationalising Education Results more from Inappropriate Development Strategies

The point being made here is this. The factors which militate against the contribution which curriculum diversification policies, particularly those aimed at vocationalising the education offered in secondary and primary schools, are expected to make to the overall development of the LDC's might be due largely to the failure of these countries to grapple effectively with the basic problems of their underdevelopment rather than the inherent futility of this approach. To begin with we can take as some small piece of evidence for the above statement the fact that the number of individuals in the LDC's who live below the poverty line seems to be steadily increasing. And it is currently estimated that about 1 billion persons in these countries are now living at a sub-marginal level of existence; 500 million are said to be directly suffering from malnutriton, 40,000 children under five die every day from preventable causes - such as hunger, thirst and illness. It was some of these conditions which culminated in the catastrophe of the Ethiopian famine which claimed about 300.000 lives by the end of 1985, despite substantial flow of emergency aid. In fact the possibility of such disasters occurring again are quite real and might even be in the horizon,

especially in some African countries.

The question is "What has such evidence of the failure of the LDC's to grapple more effectively with their development problems to do with the negative rate of return on programmes directed at vocationalising the education offered in schools in these countries. To me there seems a clear connection between them because, as I shall suggest, it is the development strategies used by these countries that have largely produced both these sets of results.

To illustrate the point it would be useful for me to review, even though briefly, some of the economic history as it pertains to this issue.

(a) The colonial powers which at one time or another occupied most of what is now referred to as the LDC's, began their colonising efforts by introducing into these countries a new range of economic activities - whether it was the commercialisation of some agricultural crop for export, the establishment of mining ventures in areas with valuable mineral resources or other similar economic activity which suited the interests of the colonizers.Such ventures often required for their operation manpower with certain amount of western education.

(b) But it was not only literacy and numeracy skills which were required from these workers but their loyalty also. This was because, in a society ruled by a foreign power with little consensus or participation of the masses in their own governance, it was necessary to develop a local group of compradors, especially among those holding admininstrative and supervisory positions. To do this it was considered useful to develop in them some vested interest in the existing arrangement and a sense of loyalty to the dominant group. Partly for this reason those who were employed in white collar jobs in the expatriate dominated sector of the economy, including the public sector, were comparatively well rewarded. So in today's jargon, the rate of return on their investment in education was relatively very high and their income levels., low as they might have

been, were nevertheless substantially above those in the traditional sector of these societies.

(c) This eventually helped to fuel the demand for the type of education which would qualify individuals to enter into supervisory positions that gradually became open to them during the passage of time. The education that was most helpful for this purpose was of the academic rather than vocational type and this marked the beginning of the differential rate of return to education in these countries in favour of academic education.

(d) Another outcome of this early wage policy was that it laid the foundation of a dualistic income structure between those employed in the "modern" as against those who earned their living in the traditional sector of these societies - a structural feature which still characterises the economies of most developing countries.

(e) Even with independence there has been little or no erosion in this dualistic income structure even though the supply of individuals with the necessary skills to do these jobs has increased, even in some cases to the point where there is beginning to be substantial numbers of "educated unemployed" in some of these countries. In other words the wage levels in these countries have not been very responsive to the increased supply of skills, a phenomenon which economists like Arthur Lewis (10) and others once assumed would almost automatically happen. One reason for this stickiness of the wages of those who work in the modern sector, especially those in supervisory and senior administrative positions, has been the powerful influence which they exert on the political leaders, especially through their well organised professional associations or trade-union groups. In contrast those who earn their living in the traditional sector of the economy are relatively unorganised and thus tend to have less influence on the political decision makers with the result that in some countries the observed inequalities between these groups

have even been increasing.

(f) Further the development policies pirsued by most of these countries even after independence contributed to the strengthening of their colonial socio-economic structures - one in which the demand for skilled labourers has been increasing much more slowly than the demand for others with an academic education - partly due to the rapid expansion of the public sector - and one which has helped to retain or increase this dualism in income structure, making white collar modern sector jobs for which an academic education is still often considered very desirable, even more attractive.

This development strategy can be described as **modern sector**, **import substitutive** and **export oriented** and it has often only marginally helped to improve, if at all, the quality of lives of those not employed in this sector of the economy. Once again when a demand for educated manpower was created it was essentially for individuals with supervisory rather than technical skills and this kept on reinforcing the income superiority of those with an academic education.

(g) Even when formal skill training was provided for individuals it was often inappropriate, both in terms of technique and cost for those in the traditional sector of the economy. For example, most of those outside the modern sector often could not afford say the services of the carpenters who were trained in the new Technical Institutes or the well trained nurse/midwife, if they had to pay the full cost of her services. This is one reason why in most developing countries about eighty percent of the doctors live in the urban centres servicing the needs of the 20% of the population who live there and can pay for their services. Therefore when those in the heavily populated traditional sector are going to build their houses they try to seek the services of the village carpenter who had no formal training, who cannot read a blue print but who might be willing to barter part of his services from some of the crops which the farmer

produces- that is providing the farmer does not try to build his own home with the help of the extended family. In other words, because of the cost factor, the demand for formally trained skilled individuals outside the small modern sector is very limited .

(h) Also many of the import-substitution industries which are involved in assemblying videos or television sets or bottling imported strawberry jam or mixing the ingredients of paints do not have much spill over benefits, in terms of the demand for skilled manpower in these countries. These "screw driver" industries often require very few if any individuals with formal technical/vocational skills, beyond that which could be acquired on the job. The demand for labour still continued to be for individuals who would supervise production and for sales representatives-again jobs for which no technical/vocational education is necessary.

(i) The import substitution policy also created a continuing divergence between domestic production and domestic consumption with the components of the products that were to be assembled locally, being nearly all imported. Local consumption of the finished products also increased with even those of limited incomes spending more of their resources on such commodities as cigarettes and beer. This in turn contributed to the worsening of the foreign exchange situation in these countries.

(j) Finally there is usually little or no backward linkages to the rest of the economy and limited local spill over benefits, especially to those in the traditional sector. The links which exist are normaly with the MDC's from where the elements which entered the production process were imported. Also the often artificially high rate of exchange of local as against foreign currency tends to make imported commodities cheaper on the local market and penalises the farmers whose crops attract foreign exchange. This again leads to the increased attractiveness of the modern

sector with its greater demand for individuals with an academic education.

In the plantation and mineral enclaves engaged in production for export the situation is not much different. In fact, as happened in the case of the Green Revolution the larger farmers are often able to buy out the land owned by smaller farmers, increasing their production for export and marginalising a larger proportion of those already at, or below the subsistence level. A somewhat similar point was made by Beckford who has sugggested that the plantation system was largely responsible for the underdevelopment and persistent poverty in the peasant sector of plantation societies.

In summary this overall development strategy created little or no new employment opportunities for workers with some degree of skill training other than that which they could rather easily obtain on the job, since if the production process was not automated it was of the type that needed only "screw driver" type technology.

In such a situation it is not surprising that only a restricted amount of development took place in many LDC's- even though growth rates were sometimes quite respectable. Within this context of the failure of the current development strategies to do much to improve the standard and quality of life in the traditional sector of most LDC's, it is not surprising to see that the political leaders and their key policy makers continue to think that some changes in the content of the curriculum of schools e.g. through diversification or linking practical work with academic studies or providing work experiences as part of general education would help to solve the problem. In fact whenever an economic crisis or major economic problems arise in these countries such as the current increase in the numbers of 'educated unemployed' the policy makers resurrect such solutions as vocationalising the curriculum of schools. This continues to be done despite the fact that the available research evidence indicates

that the manipulation of school variables, whether it is by modifying the school curriculum or developing new educational programmes would not by itself help to overcome the the problems of underdevelopment or unemployment. In fact our continuing concerns with issues like the vocationalisation of the curriculum only draws away our attention and efforts from the more important and burning issue of producing effective development and supporting education strategies aimed seriously at grappling with these crucial social and economic problems in the LDC's. To tackle them would in itself demand the more concerted attention by development and educational planners working together.

The sugggestion here is that, with a more appropriate development strategy, changes in the curriculum, including the introduction of vocational or prevocational subjects, might play a more effective role in increasing the contribution which education can make towards raising the general productivity of a country. It might help with efforts to grapple more effectively with its problems of underdevelopment ,especially in the traditional sector of these societies, and the seemingly intractable problem of unemployment which results from it. But this needs the kind of development strategy and political will and determination to implement it which most political leaders in the LDC's have not been prepared to demonstrate, at least up to this point of time. And I do recongise that their efforts are affected largely though I would say not entirely by the attitudes and practices of the MDC's. The crux of my argument therefore is that any educational strategy, such as the inclusion of practical/vocational subjects in the curriculum of schools in the LDC's can only be made effective if it is an integral part of an overalll development strategy . Therefore to say that vocational education is or is not an useful educational approach is by itself meaningless, despite the research results we now exist.

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